

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/888,668

Examiner

Peter K. Huntsinger

Applicant(s)

YAO, MENG

Art Unit

2625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the appeal brief filed 3/1/07.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-15.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Michael J. Nickerson on 6/18/07.

The application has been amended as follows:

6. A method of generating a halftone screen for converting an image received at d levels, for reproduction at c levels, where $d > c$, the method, in optional sequence, including: generating a first initial stochastic screen pattern for a first gray level, the initial stochastic screen pattern being constrained by a checkerboard pattern such that a black pixel in the first initial checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern is positioned in the first initial checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern at a pixel position corresponding to a black pixel position in the checkerboard pattern; generating a plurality of subsequent first checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen patterns, each subsequent first checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern corresponding to a specific gray level that is darker than the first gray level and is lighter than a second gray level, the second gray level being darker than the first gray level, each subsequent first checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern maintaining an arrangement of black pixels of the first initial checkerboard pattern constrained checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen

stochastic screen pattern, pattern each subsequent first including a number of additional black pixels such that a total number of black pixels in a subsequent first checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern is greater than a number of black pixels in the initial checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern, each additional black pixel in the subsequent first checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen patterns being positioned in the subsequent first checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern at a pixel position corresponding to a black pixel position in the checkerboard pattern; generating a second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern, the second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern-corresponding to the second gray level, the second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern maintaining the arrangement of black pixels of the first initial checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern, the second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern including a number of additional black pixels such that a total number of black pixels in the second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern is greater than a number of black pixels in the initial checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern, each additional black pixel in the second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen patterns being positioned in the second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern at a pixel position corresponding to a black pixel position in the checkerboard pattern; and generating a plurality of subsequent second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen patterns, each subsequent second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen

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pattern corresponding to a specific gray level that is darker than the second gray level and is lighter than a third gray level, the third gray level being darker than the second gray level, each subsequent second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern maintaining an arrangement of black pixels of the second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern, each subsequent second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern including a number of additional black pixels such that a total number of blacks in a subsequent second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern is greater than a number of black pixels in the second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen pattern, each additional black pixel in the subsequent second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen patterns being positioned in the subsequent second checkerboard pattern constrained stochastic screen patterns at a pixel position corresponding to a white pixel position in the checkerboard pattern, the third gray level corresponding to a black dither of 50% or less for gray levels (g_s) wherein $x < g_s < y$, x corresponding to 100% black, y corresponding to 0% black.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Referring to claims 1, 6, and 9, Stanich '813 discloses the method of halftone generation but does not disclose the limitation of the third gray level corresponding to a black dither of 50% or less for gray levels (g_s) wherein $x < g_s < y$, x corresponding to 100% black, y corresponding to 0% black.

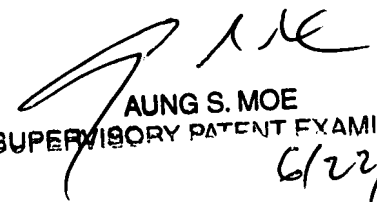
Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peter K. Huntsinger whose telephone number is (571)272-7435. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Moe Aung can be reached on (571)272-7314. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

PKH



AUNG S. MOE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
6/22/07